

forward in our understanding of how social change was at first disastrously experimented with, and then how it actually took place.

The only quibble with all this concerns excessive wordiness in the book. Indeed, an injection of the jargon of sociology into the humanities is a high price to pay for an understanding of the past. Dr. Dülmen must devote more time to improving his style and cut out what is often banal and repetitive. The conciseness of the first section (pp. 9-63) summarising the interlinked roles played by protesters from before Luther, to the peasants and then, brilliantly, to Luther himself, contrasts with the later chapters which are characterized by verbosity and lacking style. However, this should not distract the determined reader who wishes to discover what is the western liberal sociological line on the Reformation, which Dr. Dülmen epitomises, and finally summarises (pp. 361-9).

Gerhard BENECKE,
University of Kent.

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JOYCE OLDHAM APPLEBY. — *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978. Pp. 10, 287.

In this ambitious monograph, Dr. Joyce Oldham Appleby attempts to chart the genesis of capitalist "ideology" in the new economic perceptions and interpretations put forth in Stuart England. "This study deals with the way in which the English first described their commercial economy. It traces the intellectual origins of capitalism through some 1,500 treatises, tracts, pamphlets, handbills, and broadsides written by Englishmen during the course of the seventeenth century" (p. 4). Seeking to escape from the anachronistic perspective that has tended to trace economic thought as an unbroken line leading to the truths of the classical economists, Dr. Appleby presents her findings in a more dialectical manner, as a series of real debates over live issues. Nine topically organized, chronologically arranged chapters chart the disputes of seventeenth-century writers around such themes as: "The Intellectual Response to Economic Crisis", "The Moral Economy in Retreat", "The Poor as a Productive Resource", "Contending Views of the Role of the State", and "A New Argument for Economic Freedom". What emerges is a complex intellectual history of economic ideas.

In basic terms, the book argues that new models of economic development arose in response to the spread of a market economy and that these new ideas, in turn, shaped the behaviour of those who understood and applied them. It rightly points out that state intervention hardly formed an innovative theme uniting the mercantilists; their importance lay in another direction, in the "differentiation of things economic from their social context" (p. 26). Thomas Mun receives pride of place in this process. "...Mun created a paradigm. He abstracted England's trade relations from their real context and built in that place an intellectual model" (p. 41). Using the abstract idea of the balance of trade to explain England's economic crisis of the 1620s, Mun not only produced a particular explanatory hypothesis that was capable of considerable further refinement, he started from an innovative set of basic assumptions that could provide a whole range of fruitful hypotheses, definitions, questions, and puzzles. With an important assist from Edward Misselden, Mun constructed a comprehensive model of an autonomous economic system, one that claimed to follow discernible laws and to separate appearance from reality.

From the 1620s onward, this model of the market confronted other modes of economic explanation. In most educated circles, it routed its rivals by 1660. During

the last decades of the seventeenth century it branched out and developed considerable scope, complexity, and explanatory facility, taking in the behaviour of participants as well as the balance of trade. By the time of the great debates over reminting of the coinage in the 1690s, two theories — each springing from Mun's assumptions — stood opposed. Because it better represented the interests of the landed peers and gentry who sat in Parliament, the more conservative one — backed by John Locke — triumphed over the more liberal one — supported by Sir Dudley North, Jr., Nicholas Barbon, John Houghton, Sir Dalby Thomas, and Henry Martyn.

The economic model of Locke and the landed Whig magnates who made the crucial decisions for English economic development rested on the sanctity of the silver standard and the notion of balancing trade accounts, ideas replete with political meaning. The liberals conceived of a commercial society built upon an economic meritocracy and uniform market responses, a competitive model rendered safe to them by their own commercial aptitude (pp. 258-9).

Ironically for an emerging "social science" based upon separating "things economic from their social context," a balance of trade theory won out over a sophisticated concept of market behaviour not because of its superior intellectual merit, but because of its political backing.

Such a spare summary cannot capture all of the strengths and ambiguities contained in *Economic Thought and Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England*. The book has two basic strengths: an overall thesis that makes a good deal of sense out of a large body of evidence and some excellent detailed analysis and discussion of the position taken by individual writers. It makes a number of corrections to earlier accounts of English economic thought, as well. These positive accomplishments, however, are tarnished by some substantial weaknesses. The book lacks clarity, especially in sustaining themes: see, for example, the meandering chapter six on "The Poor as a Productive Resource" which takes up topic after unrelated topic and does not link its generalizations very well with its evidence. Much of the text fails to build a sophisticated historical context. It abounds, therefore, with dubious sentences such as that praising the political thinkers of the mid-seventeenth century: "Never again could a mindless traditionalism take the place of an articulated theory of government" (p. 24). Few well read historians would characterize the political thought of either the middle ages or the sixteenth century or the early seventeenth century as a "mindless traditionalism." Indeed, one of the greatest difficulties of this monograph is its tendency to treat even economic thought before the 1620s as something "traditional," unchanging, hardly articulated, and, therefore, not worthy of serious study. This does less than justice to such ideas as the "just price" (much discussed) or the "self-sustaining household" (articulated from Xenophon's *Oikonomia* onwards) that helped to frame the moral economy. These flaws mar the lustre of the often subtle, shrewd, and penetrating analysis of seventeenth-century English economic writings presented in most of the chapters of this study. Historians of economic thought will learn much of value from its discussion of well and lesser known figures, however, and should find its basic thesis very stimulating and fruitful.

Paul CHRISTIANSON,
Queen's University.